

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0178

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PARM, NATO,UR

SUBJECT: KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ON MBFR

1. SUMMARY. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, IN ITS FIRST MENTION OF MBFR IN MONTHS IN A SIGNED COMMENTARY ON JANUARY 3, DEVIATES SOMEWHAT FROM THE USUAL FORMULATION ON THOSE NEGOTIATIONS IN CALLING FOR REDUCTIONS " OF EQUAL VALUE." THIS COULD BE A SIGNE OF GREATER SOVIET FLEXIBILITY OF MBFR. END SUMMARY.

2. DRASNAYA ZVEZDA'S JANUARY 3 ISSUE CARRIES A SIGNED
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COMMENTARY (V. LAPSKIY) WHICH, INTER ALIA, TOUCHES ON

MBFR, THE FIRST MENTION WE HAVE SEEN OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE ARMY NEWSPAPER FOR MANY MONTHS. REVIEWING THE COURSE OF THE JUST CONCLUDED FOURTH ROUND, THE COMMENTARY CONCLUDES THAT THE REASON NO CONCRETE RESULTS HAVE YET BEEN REACHED IS THAT THE "WESTERN NATIONS WOULD LIKE TO ACHIEVE CERTAIN UNILATERAL ADVANTAGES AND ARE NOT YET READY TO BEGIN REAL MUTUAL REDUCTIONS OF EQUAL VALUE (PODLINNOE VZAIMNOE RAVNOTSENNOE SOKRUSHCHENIE) IN ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS... THROUGH THEIR FAULT THIS MATTER OF IMPORTANCE TO ALL EUROPEANS THEREFORE HAS NOT YET GOTTEN UNDERWAY." THE COMMENTARY CONTINUES, SPEAKING ABOUT THE FIFTH ROUND, THAT "THE SOCIALIST STATES WILL AS BEFORE PERSIST IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO ACHIEVE A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. IT IS ENTIRELY LOGICAL THAT A RELAXATION OF POLITICAL TENSION BE STRENGTHENED BY A RELAXATION IN THE MILITARY AREA."

3. ZARUBEZHOM, IN ITS JANUARY 3 ISSUE, CALLS MBFR "A MOST IMPORTANT LINK" IN DETENTE IN EUROPE. THE MOST RECENT SOCIALIST PROPOSALS, IT STATES, "IN THE OPINION OF OBSERVERS,... WILL MAKE POSSIBLE THE TRANSFER FROM A DISCUSSION OF POSITIONS TO CONCRETE STEPS--TO ACTUAL REDUCTION. OBSERVERS CONSIDER THAT THE LONG NEGOTIATIONS ARE FINALLY ENTERING INTO THE ACTION STAGE (V PRAKTICHESKUYU FAZU). THE GOOD WILL OF THE SOCIALIST STATES MAKES POSSIBLE THE STRENGTHENING OF POLITICAL DETENTE WITH MILITARY DETENTE."

4. COMMENT. THE KRASNAYA ZVEZDA COMMENTARY DEVIATES SOMEWHAT FROM THE USUAL FORMULATIONS IN ITS USE OF THE WORD "OF EQUAL VALUE" (RAVNOTSENNOE) WHEN SPEAKING OF REDUCTIONS. THIS CHANGE FROM THE USUAL FORMULATION "MUTUAL REDUCTIONS"--"VZAIMNOE"--IMPLYING EXACTLY EQUIVALENT REDUCTIONS, MIGHT POSSIBLY BE READ TO HINT GREATER SOVIET FLEXIBILITY--I.E., ASYMMETRICAL GROUND FORCE CUTS ON THE ONE SIDE COULD PERHAPS BE COMPENSATED BY ASYMMETRICAL WEAPONS CUTS BY THE OTHER SIDE.

5. USDAO MOSCOW SEES NOTHING UNUSUAL IN THE FORMULATION AND DOES NOT AGREE WITH THIS CONCLUSION.
STOESSEL

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